

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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## AGRICULTURE

### HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

XCIII.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

A few days ago a neighbor called us to go with him to a burnt-down tenant house to see a colored child which had been left in the house and had been burnt to death. The house was closed up but not locked, and the whole family, excepting this child, was away.

We would not mention this but for the fact that it is a common occurrence and entails a loss on the owners; not only this, but the horrible death inflicted on innocent children is sufficient to arouse the feelings of every thinking man and woman. It seems that it is confined entirely to the colored race. We have a law forbidding the locking the doors of houses containing children, yet it is a dead letter. What is the remedy? Can some one devise a plan that will prevent this trouble in the future? The negroes say that to leave the house open is just simply to lose all they own, for no sooner is it known than some neighbor will go over and pilfer the house and take every thing they can lay their hands on. We all know this is true. But lives should not be destroyed this way.

No farmer who rents houses to colored people will escape loss sooner or later. It is out of the question to insure, for no company wishes to carry such risks without charging a rate which will be prohibitive. Any person could be prosecuted for cruelty for shutting up children, but that would do just about as much good as lynching, and almost every close observer knows that is a failure so far as preventing the crimes for which such punishment is intended to prevent. In all cases of such fires, the farmers are generally the heaviest losers.

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Now is a good time to cull out all cattle and other stock on the farm that it will not pay to carry over till spring. A close calculation will show that many farmers lose money by feeding old cows or yearlings which are worth only what they will bring in beef. We have found it best to keep young stock as much so as possible. It will cost several dollars more to keep a twelve-year-old cow than it will a six-year-old, and unless a cow has some special merit we prefer to get clear of them before they reach twelve years.

HARRY FARMER.

### The Velvet Bean.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The following clipping is from a Wilmington paper:

"Mr. B. G. Worth has growing in his garden a remarkable plant known as the velvet bean. It grew from one bean and is remarkable for the profusion of its vine and foliage and the immense size of the bunches of beans upon it. It is also quite prolific and must have upon it a half bushel of beans. Some of the clusters are fifteen inches long and the shelled beans in a cluster would fill a pint cup. The leaves resemble those of the butter bean. It is presumed to be a forage plant but Mr. Worth does not know whether it is good for stock or not. Who can tell us? Dr. G. C. Worth has quite a patch of these beans on Greenville Sound, and they have absolutely covered the earth. They are matted all over the ground to a height of three or four feet."

Is not this plant the same that is so highly prized by the Florida cattlemen as a stock food? I have been unable to ascertain the botanical name of the plant. Would like to have Prof. Massey tell us something about it, as it seems to me a good thing for stockmen to grow, if what our Florida friends say of it is true.

ROBT. S. TAYLOR.

Duplin Co., N. C.

(Answer by Prof. W. F. Massey, of N. C. Agricultural Experiment Station.)

The plant mentioned in the clipping sent by Mr. Taylor is doubtless the velvet bean, now so largely grown in Florida, but in our climate it cannot compete with the cow pea as a forage plant, since it requires too long a season. Where they have eight months of hot weather it is a plant of very great value, but planted here in April I found that it had just begun to bloom in October; hence it cannot, of course, be sown after the grain crop, as we do the cow pea. It makes an immense mass of growth and merely for the purpose of accumulating humus in the soil, it may pay in the warmer section of the State.

It is all right for South Florida, but the cowpea will beat it in North Carolina.

The botanical name of the velvet bean is *Mucuna Utilis*.

Conscience warns us as a friend before it punishes us as a judge.—Stanislaus.

### MAKE THE BEST OF WHAT YOU HAVE.

#### Great Results May be Accomplished by Careful Selection and Development of Any Breed or Variety.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

In August I disposed of my Elberta peaches. I have six trees of that variety and by a careful system of spraying I had peaches of most excellent quality. Many of them measured  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and weighed 1 pound and 2 ounces, and cut  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches clear meat between skin and seed. These found ready sale at one dollar a basket; in fact, no one asked about the price, they were so astounded at the appearance. I could have sold a great many.

I gave Colonel Creecy two of these peaches last year. The Colonel is 96 years old and said he had never seen anything like them before. He said in his *Economist-Falcon* that they must have grown in the days when there were giants in the land.

The average size of the Elberta peach offered for sale in the city markets, is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and weighs 4 ounces. I thought I was the champion on Elberta peaches. I have wanted to write something about these peaches before, but was afraid the discussion would stagger belief, but when I saw in *The Progressive Farmer* of August 26th, the story about the peaches that the State Museum had received from Southern Pines I found myself away behind. But at any rate, I am up with the times about home on peaches.

I have also a lot of fine apples, Baldwins, Magnum Borums, and Winesaps, that are very fine. Can't raise any fruit without spraying. I have 13 varieties of grapes. Have these to spray also.

It was said by Patrick Henry that eternal vigilance was the price of liberty, but in these latter days it is the price of hog and hominy, or at least of success in any kind of business. Farming is as much a profession as medicine, law or surgery, and a man succeeds in farming as in other professions in proportion as he is proficient in his profession. He must study the nature and habits of plants and trees, find out their needs and supply them and protect them against their enemies. He may do this in a greater or less degree without knowing anything else. One of the best farmers I know can't read or write. One of the best financiers

I know does not know his name if he sees it in print. He can calculate the most complicated sum in partial payments by his head, but doesn't know a figure in the book.

So, brother farmers, study hard to become proficient in your profession. Make the best out of what you have; there's no telling what you can accomplish. Take the peach story, for example; see what development. You can take your hogs, your cattle, your sheep, your poultry, and, by careful study and feed and attention, develop them into anything you want. I have a stock of hogs that I have bred myself and you can't go into any breeder's farm east of Biltmore and find a hog that will compare with them. I have had woods cows that would give four gallons of milk per day, and make 12 ounces of butter. My poultry are of no particular breed, but I have by careful selection of pullets every winter and by introducing new roosters of no relation to the hens, developed a breed that would surprise you as to results.

You will find in among your stock and poultry every year some specimens finer than the rest. Save these for breeding. Don't throw away your old stock to get new, unless you are situated to take care of the new ones. If you can't swim a herring, don't go and get a whale, but make the best you can out of what you have, and add to it as you are able.

JACK JOHNSON.

Perquimans Co., N. C.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has recently issued *Farmers' Bulletin No. 154*, entitled "The Home Fruit Garden: Preparation and Care." This bulletin was prepared by L. C. Corbett, Horticulturist of the Bureau of Plant Industry of the Department, and contains much information in regard to the laying out and care of small fruit gardens.

After stating the object of a fruit garden, the bulletin describes the relation of the home garden to the fruit interests, the influence of amateur fruit growers upon communities, changed conditions of fruit culture, and the advantages and pleasures of the home fruit garden. This is followed by directions for cultivation of the garden, including modification of the soil, preparation of plants, pruning and protection. Suggestions are given for adapting plants to the conditions prevailing, combining plants of various habits and growth, and for a combined fruit and vegetable garden.